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## **Sen. Allen urges U.S. Coast Guard to retain Charlevoix cutter ship**

**LANSING** – State Sen. Jason Allen, R-Traverse City, introduced a resolution Wednesday urging the U.S. Coast Guard to continue to operate a cutter ship out of Charlevoix.

Currently, the Coast Guard operates three similar class ships on the Great Lakes out of Port Huron and Charlevoix, and Duluth, Minnesota. Plans have been announced to scale back the number of these ships servicing the Great Lakes to two when Charlevoix's Acacia is decommissioned in 2006.

“The United States Coast Guard Cutter Acacia provides essential navigational, as well as search and rescue services,” Allen said. “Keeping a cutter operational out of Charlevoix is imperative to the economic wellbeing and public safety of northern Michigan residents and visitors.”

Built in 1944, the Acacia performs patrols, tends nearly 200 navigation aids and keeps channels open in winter by breaking ice. The Acacia has also assisted in several emergency situations, including rescue missions to aid Beaver Island residents during inclement weather.

A Coast Guard rescue station has been operated in Charlevoix since 1889.

“It’s hard to imagine how Lake Michigan could be serviced without a vessel stationed in the northwest portion of the lower peninsula,” Allen said. “Our Great Lakes cover such a large territory to be served by just two ships. I sincerely hope the Coast Guard will reconsider their plans to reduce the number of these cutters operating on the Great Lakes and maintain a vessel in Charlevoix.”

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